

May 12, 1999

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 106 4252 99 MAY 19 P3:37
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Re: Docket #98N-1038, "Irradiation in the Production,
Processing, and Handling of Food"

To whom it may concern:

We request the FDA to retain the current labeling law, the current terminology of "treated by irradiation," and the use of the radura symbol on all irradiated whole foods and ingredients. Such labeling should be large enough to be readily visible on the front of the package. If the food is unpackaged, this information should be clearly displayed in plain view and adjacent to where the product is displayed for sale.

Any phrase involving the word "pasteurization" would be misleading and untruthful because that is an entirely different process of rapid heating and cooling.

Even though the FDA has approved irradiation as safe, it remains a new technology with no long-term human feeding studies. Consumers have a right to know if this process has been used on their food. Irradiation remains a "material fact" about the processing of food; therefore labeling should remain.

Consumers should be educated by the FDA regarding the changes in storage qualities, nutrient content, texture, spoilage characteristics, chemical changes, etc. that occur with irradiation.

The requirement for irradiation disclosure (both label and radura) should not expire at any time in the future.

Respectfully yours,

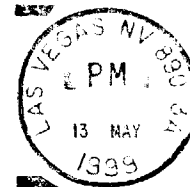
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cc Senator Harry Reid
Senator Richard Bryan
Congressman John Ensign

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